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Lexical loans and their diffusion in old english: of ‘gospels’, ‘martyrs’, and ‘teachers’

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Abstract: The study of borrowed vocabulary and language contact in the Old English period is technically problematic in many ways. Surviving texts give us few clues as to how loans functioned outside the clerical communities, what their regional and register distributions were, and to what extent written sources reflect the circulation of loans in spoken language. This may suggest that a descriptive catalogue of lexical loans is the only approach applicable to the Old English material. This paper, however, aims at an inferential analysis of several loans from Latin and Greek in the religious and educational domain based on contemporary approaches to linguistic innovation, diffusion and change, and the wider cultural context that would have ensured their currency and dissemination – social networks provided by medieval schools and monasteries, and the ecclesiastical community at large. Using a select body of educated loans, it argues that strong ties within monastic communities would generally have prevented contact-induced lexical change from spreading outside the monasteries. Yet the role of individual innovators with both clerical and non-clerical ties and early adopters with elementary Latin proficiency (parish priests) in diffusion of change should not be underestimated.

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Lexical loans and their diffusion in Old English: of ‘gospels’, ‘martyrs’, and ‘teachers’

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Introduction

That lexical borrowing is a type of lexical change is axiomatic in historical linguistics (Hock & Joseph 1996; Grzega 2012; etc.). It is assumed to be largely motivated by conceptual-lexical gaps that have to be filled with cultural loans or by the prestige associated with certain social groups that can be achieved by using the lexis of those groups, which often results in core loans and sociolinguistic differentiation between core loans and their native-based equivalents (Matras 2009; Grzega 2012; but see Lutz 2013). A greater or lesser degree of bilingualism is expected among the speakers of a recipient language (RL) in order for a loanword to enter, adapt to and disseminate in that language. The loan would first gain ground among those bilingual in the source language (SL) and RL, or the innovators. If it ‘sticks’ and comes to be perceived as part of the norm within this community, the loan may spread further via such social channels as family bonds, friendship or professional relations to other communities, or at least to early adopters among them, and later on to the RL community at large. Thus, lexical loans may progress from speaker innovation to linguistic change (Matras 2009). This process may, however, also be aborted at any stage and the loan would fail to diffuse or be forgotten. Such is the fate of two indirect loans discussed in section 2 – *cýþere* ‘martyr, witness’ and *browere* ‘martyr, sufferer’ – which emerge as Winchester norms, enjoy limited diffusion but fail to gain wider ground and die out in the late Old English (OE) period.

Straightforward as this scenario may seem, the histories of individual loanwords are much more complex, and, when we try to apply it to the early stages of a language, much more fragmentary. The study of historical English lexis and historical language contact, especially in the OE period, is technically problematic in many ways. One fundamental problem is the size of the surviving OE corpus – around 3 million words. While this lament on the size and scope of OE should certainly be done with an eye on other Old Germanic languages whose records are meagre compared to Old English, 3

million words consisting mainly of religious writings, give us very few clues as to how loans functioned outside the clerical communities, what their regional and register distributions were, and to what extent written sources reflect the circulation of loans in spoken language. Furthermore, lexical loans being typically content words of low frequency, many of them feature only marginally in the linguistic record and give us no information on their real currency, often making any sociolinguistic extrapolation of the observed patterns unverifiable (Timofeeva 2017).

Given the limitations of the OE data, it is not surprising that previous research has rarely focused on the diffusion of loanwords, or on ‘the status of a loanword’ emphatically called for analysis by Helmut Gneuss: “its currency and distribution in particular texts, its role in a field of synonyms and its significance for our knowledge of cultural history in the widest sense” (1993: 140). What OE lexicography has done instead is compilation and refinement of lists of loanwords from Celtic (a series of publications by Breeze, e.g. 1995a and 1995b), Latin (Wollmann 1990), Greek (Feulner 2000); definitions of loanwords: direct loans vs. loan-translations, semantic loans, and all sorts of hybrid loans (Gneuss 1955; Kastovsky 1992; Durkin 2014); and adaptation of loans in terms of phonology and morphology (Wollmann 1990), i.e. the distinction between foreign words and loanwords. A discussion of borrowed lexical elements in relation to the wider cultural context of the early Germanic world has been offered by D.H. Green (1998), while typological approaches to OE borrowed vocabulary have been discussed by Andreas Fischer (2003) and Angelika Lutz (2013). The problems that are only marginally touched in the literature but greatly important for our understanding of the role and functioning of foreign lexis in OE are those of structural distinction between loans and code-switches and the applicability of scales and clines of borrowability to written Old English (Timofeeva 2010). In this respect, some source languages have been luckier than others. For example, Scandinavian loans have been the focus of theoretical discussions of language contact in the history of English since the publication of the seminal 1988 study by Sarah Thomason and Terrence Kaufman, re-evaluated critically by Anglicists on a number of occasions (Millar 2000; Dance 2003; Skaffari 2009), while Latin and Greek (including Greek via Latin) loans of the OE period are still largely confined to lists of words with subgroups organised according to the reconstructed period of their first attestations (Serjeantson 1935; Kastovsky 1992; Durkin 2014; but see a selection of

detailed case studies in Wollmann 1990). Static and neglecting to take the dynamics of lexical change into account as the list-based approaches might be, their etymological and lexicographic value is beyond doubt. Informed cataloguisation of all foreign lexical items is probably the only factually safe thing available to us. My intention, however, is to move beyond this descriptive approach and offer an inferential analysis of several loans from Latin and Greek in the religious domain based on contemporary approaches to linguistic innovation, diffusion and change, and the wider cultural context that would have ensured their currency and dissemination – social networks provided by medieval schools and monasteries, and the ecclesiastical community at large.

It has recently been emphasized that surviving OE represents mostly upper-class, male, religious, written language springing from the West-Saxon monastic centres or those influenced by the West-Saxon norms (Timofeeva 2017). Coupled with the problems outlined above, these limitations leave generalisations in the lexical domain exposed to a number of critical points: what about the vocabulary of the lower classes, lay people, women, speakers of OE as a second language, etc. The answer is clear – we can neither hope to get hold of another social variety of OE nor test how far educated lexis was intelligible among other social groups than the clergy. The clergy itself, however, was not a monolith, but a hierarchical community that consisted of high and low clergy, regular and secular clergy, married and reformed clergy, monks and nuns, educated clergy and parish priests who could barely understand the mass. Diffusion of lexical change among and between these units of the ecclesiastical community is not a straightforward matter, but one that is definitely worth reconstructing and looking into, because the further away we go from the educated high the closer we might get to that hypothetical silent majority.

There are two simple tests that I apply in this investigation: the test of time and the test of place. If a lexeme survives beyond the OE period, it is inferred to have had wide currency within it. If a lexeme is attested in more than one text and, further, in more than one dialect or locality (if known), it is inferred to have enjoyed at least some circulation in the OE period, and possible diffusion scenarios are suggested. To make the most of the limited data I take into account only those lexemes that are central to the religious-educational domain in which they originated. To provide them with a maximum contextualisation (along the lines urged by Gneuss) I also take an onomasiological

approach to loanwords vs. possible RL alternatives, starting from naming (rather than meaning): charting all possible lexicalisation paths for a particular concept (cf. Zenner & Kristiansen 2014: 6–7). These are obtained from the *Thesaurus of Old English* (TOE) and checked in the *Dictionary of Old English* (DOE; if the lemma is available) and the *Dictionary of Old English Corpus* (DOEC). The lexemes that I have chosen for this investigation are *godspell* ‘gospel’, *martyr* ‘martyr, sufferer for faith’ and *magister* ‘teacher; master’. They are not only semantically central among the educated loans of the insular period (for summaries of the debate on periodisation, see Kastovsky 1992; Durkin 2014), but also represent different categories of loanwords: *godspell* and *martyr* are cultural loans, with the former being a loan-translation and the latter a direct loan, while *magister* is a basic loan. How much these factors facilitate or preclude their diffusion will be shown below. The loans are addressed in turn starting from the most to the less frequent, their diffusion reconstructed against the background of the tests of time and place and the historical-cultural context of the period. As the choice of lexemes suggests, my definition of the loanword is broad: a word or phrase that lexicalises in a RL under the situation of contact with a SL. The paths by which lexicalisation happens (structural and semantic), however, are included in the discussions of the individual lexemes.

1. *godspell*

This lexeme has four senses: ‘good tidings; evangelical message; gospel-book; pericope’. Each individual sense and the concept associated with it are considered separately, with alternative names for the same concept being retrieved from the TOE and analysed in terms of etymology and distribution.

1.1. ‘good tidings’

In 1955 Gneuss remarked that *godspell* was a school example (*Schulbeispiel*) of loan-translation in Old English (94). Nevertheless, a brief summary of its etymology and diachronic developments would be in place. OE *godspell* was borrowed from Greek *euaggelion* via Latin *ēvangelium*. The Greek word is a compound derived from *eu* ‘good’ and *aggelia* ‘message’ (Feulner 2000: 226; cf. Green 1998: 346). Although this etymology may not be transparent in the Latin source-form *ēvangelium*, it is interpreted in the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville (c.560–636), an extremely influential

‘encyclopaedia’ in the Middle Ages (Barney et al. 2006: 24–27), as *bona adnuntiatio* (vi.2.43). A similar definition is known from the OE glossary tradition: *euangelium*, *ID EST bonum nuntium*, godspel (ÆGI 304.6). Thus, the original meaning of OE *gōd-spell* was also ‘good message, good tidings’. However, by a regular shortening of long vowels before consonant clusters the OE term became *god-spell* and was re-etymologised as ‘God’s message’ (Green 1998: 346–347; cf. Campbell 1959: §285). In spelling the length of the vowel was of course generally unmarked, and popular etymology (among poorly educated priests) might well have been current even before the phonological shortening.

Although clearly dominant in the religious domain (see below), *godspell* is not the only term for ‘good tidings’. According to the TOE, the concept GOOD TIDINGS can be expressed by three other compounds. Two of them have the same structure as *godspell* – adjective+noun – and share its second element *spell*; these are *lēof-spell* ‘pleasant message’ and *will-spell* ‘welcome message’. The third compound *mūþ-hæġl* has a noun+noun structure and means ‘mouth-happiness, mouth-luck > auspice, prognostication (?)’, most probably akin to Danish *mundheld* ‘mouth-luck > proverb, saying, maxim’.¹ As this lexeme occurs only once in an alliterating position, introducing a speech by Moses in the *Exodus* (553a), its exact meaning is difficult to verify. The two *-spell* compounds are attested only in the poem *Elene* and refer to the good news of St. Helena’s finding of the Cross: *wilspella* (983b), *willspelle* (993b) and *leofspell* (1016b), but also *morgenspel* ‘morning news, glorious news (?)’ (969a). One would be tempted to conclude that these *-spell* compounds are specific to Cynewulf, the author of *Elene* (fl. 9th c.), were *willspel* not also attested in the Middle English Layamon’s *Brut* (after 1189): 677, 8803, 15409 and the Old Saxon *Heliand* (c.830): vi.519, vi.527, lxxi.5942 and lxxi.5945, which suggests that *willspel* might have had a much wider circulation in OE and, more generally, North Sea Germanic poetry than surviving sources would intimate.

1.2. ‘evangelical message, gospel’

Apart from *godspell* the only term identified in the TOE as expressing the concept EVANGELICAL MESSAGE is *word*. As the task of analysing the semantics of 4,298

¹ Jacob Thaisen (p.c.). I am also grateful to my anonymous reviewer for pointing out a more likely interpretation of OE *hæġl* as ‘sign of luck, prognostication’.

occurrences of *word* in the DOEC for the purposes of this article appeared to be daunting, I limited my searches to the collocation *godes word* ‘the word of God’ in the singular. This procedure returned 153 hits, which may not be the whole picture but at the same time not a major underestimation – Bosworth-Toller gives three citations for the sense ‘the word of God’: two in collocation with *godes* and one from the Parable of the Sower (Mk 4.14–20) with its prototypical use of the metaphor THE WORD AS EVANGELICAL MESSAGE (BT s.v. *word* IV). My intuition is that *word* referring to ‘the word of God’ would mostly be limited to contexts translating or commenting on the parable (Mt 13; Mk 4; Lk 8) and on the equally crucial use of *word* in the opening of the Gospel of John, as in Ælfric’s homily on the Nativity (*Nativitas Domini*, ex. 1).

- (1) ac se godspellere oferdrifð þyllice gedwolan þus awritende: On anginne wæs **Word**, & **þæt Word** wæs mid Gode, & **þæt Word** wæs God. (ÆHom 1 (154–156))
- ‘but the evangelist refutes this heresy by writing: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.’

Among the 153 occurrences, 49 (32 per cent) are found in Ælfric’s works and 33 (22 per cent) in the *Old English Bede* in passages dealing with the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons and with the Anglo-Saxon missions to other Germanic peoples. In fact, the *Old English Bede* shows a preference of its author to *godes word* over *godspell* (15 occurrences), but this tendency may have to do with the Latin text of the *Historia ecclesiastica*. In example 2 the two terms appear to be synonymous, translating *uerbum Dei* and *euangelizando* of the original (HE v.9.476.3–4):

- (2) he wolde ðæt apostolice wiorc onhyrgan, sumum ðara ðeoda **Godes word** & **godspell** læran & bodigan þæm ðe hit ða get ne geherdan. (Bede 5 (9.408.19–21))
- ‘he [Egbert] desired to imitate the apostolic work, to teach and preach the word of God and gospel to some of the nations who had not heard it yet.’

A similar dependency may be true for Ælfric's homilies. Commenting on the gospel reading of the day Ælfric would often quote short passages from the Scriptures or supply his English versions of them. This seems to be the case with the homily on the Nativity of John the Baptist, one part of which is loosely based on the Gospel of Luke (ex. 3).

- (3) On þam fiteoþan geare þæs caseres rices tyberii. com **godes word** ofer iohannem on þam westene (ÆCHom I, 25 (380.46–47))

‘In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar the word of God came unto John in the wilderness.’

Cf. the Vulgate: anno autem quintodecimo imperii Tiberii Caesaris ... factum est **verbum Dei** super Iohannem ... in deserto (Lk 3.1–2)

The scope of this study does not permit me to go into all the instances of *godes word* in my database, but the tendencies observable in the two main users of the term suggest that *godes word* (and likely *word* too) is often dependent on the Latin usage in the Gospels, Latin homiletic texts, *Historia ecclesiastica* and other sources.

1.3. ‘gospel-book’

In this domain *godspell* has four competitors: *cristes-bōc*, *godes bōc*, *godspell-bōc*, and *euangelium*. *cristes-bōc* occurs predominantly as an unverbated form (93 instances), but two-word forms are also attested (13 instances).² Among the 106 occurrences in both spellings, 77 (or 73 per cent) are found in Ælfric's works. Considering that 38 per cent of *godspell* data (343 instances) also come from Ælfric, it would be plausible to suggest that for this prolific writer and preacher *cristes-bōc*, referring exclusively to the ‘Book’ (DOE s.v.), was indeed a useful lexeme particularly in contexts where both the ‘Message’ and ‘Book’ or the ‘pericope’ and ‘Book’ had to be discussed (ex. 4; cf. Lenker 1997: 90–91) or where tautology was to be stylistically avoided (ex. 5):

² This is so far, of course, as the editorial decisions behind the DOEC hits (and the editions used by the DOEC compilers) allow us to see. The same applies to the spellings of *godes bōc* addressed below. Cf. also a discussion of genitive compounds in Fulk, Bjork & Niles (2008: 322–323).

- (4) Ac we habbað nu micele maran endebyrdnysse þære **cristesbec** gesæd: þonne ðis dægðerlice **godspel**: behæfð: for trymmynge eowres geleafan. Nu wille we eow gereccan þæs dægðerlican **godspelles** traht. æfter þæs halgan papan gregories trahtnunge. (ÆCHom I, 15 (301.70–74))

‘But we have now said much more about the sequence [of events] in the book of Christ than this present day’s gospel requires for the confirmation of your faith. We will now explain to you this day’s gospel passage, according to the exposition of the holy pope Gregory’

- (5) Se **godspellere** matheus awrat on **cristesbec** (ÆCHom I, 15 (304.133))

‘Matthew the evangelist wrote in [his] gospel’

godes bōc is slightly more ambiguous than *cristes-bōc*, especially when used in the plural, for potentially ‘God’s books’ may refer to the books of the New Testament, Old Testament, Bible in general or apocryphal books. The term occurs 27 times in the corpus and is never univerted, which again may suggest that the concept behind *godes bōc* is more fluid and contextual. My estimation is that only 6 instances of the phrase can be associated with the ‘gospel-book’. In example 6 this connection is made explicit by the collocation with *godspell*.

- (6) & us is mycel nedþearf þæt we us sylfe geðencean & gemunan & þonne geornost, þonne we gehyron **Godes bec** us beforan reccean & rædan, & **godspell** secggean, & his wuldorþrymmas mannum cyþan. (HomU 20 (BIHom 10) (73))

‘and it is very necessary for us to consider and think about it [the true faith] to ourselves, and most diligently when we hear God’s books explained and read to us, and the gospel declared, and His power and glory made known to men’

The data on *godspell-bōc* (2 occurrences) and *euuangelio* (1 occurrence) is too limited to offer a meaningful discussion.

1.4. ‘pericope’

This sense can only exceptionally be served by other lexemes than *godspell*: *ræding* and *euuangelium*. Accordingly, neither of them is identified by the TOE. Ursula Lenker observes that *ræding* is a contextual synonym for *godspell* ‘pericope’. The term has a limited currency, and all of her examples come from Ælfric (1997: 91). The two attestations of the direct loan *euuangelium* are found in the late-eleventh-century copy of the *Confessionale pseudo-Egberti* from Worcester (Conf 1.1 (Spindler) 309 and 313), together with the only occurrence of *euuangelio* ‘gospel book’ (Conf 1.1 (Spindler) 260). All the three are marked by italics in the DOEC, which means that the editors interpreted them as Latin (or Greek) rather than OE words. Accordingly no entry for *euangelium* is found in the DOE. I find this editorial decision inconsistent with many other entries that include Latin loans with Latin morphology, not least because *euangelista* ‘evangelist’ arguably weakly integrated morphologically is admitted among OE headwords (DOE s.v.). Indeed ex. 7 suggests that *euangelium* may be a valid edition to the list of Greek-Latin loans in OE (cf. Feulner 2000: 226), at least as a minor-use pattern among Worcester scribes.

- (7) Preost þonne he mæssan singe, ne hæbbe he him heden ne cæppan, ac gif he
euuangelium ræde, lecge him on þa gescyldra. (Conf 1.1 (Spindler) 313)
 ‘When a priest should sing the mass, let him have no hood or cap, and if he should
 read the gospel, let him put the hood on the shoulders’

In the three examples from the *Confessionale pseudo-Egberti* the term refers to reading from or swearing upon the gospel book, which may explain why it was preferred to *godspell* in this context: possibly for terminological precision, to distinguish ‘gospel reading’ during the service and ‘gospel book’ from the ‘evangelical message’ in general.

1.5. Why *godspell*?

In contrast to the terms discussed in 1.1–4, *godspell* has the widest diachronic and diatopic currency. Attested 903 times in the entire DOEC, in early and late OE, across the 1066 divide, in many text types and genres (especially frequently in homilies), in translations and original OE works, *godspell* is also a base for numerous derivatives: *godspell-bōc* ‘gospel-book’ (2 occurrences; see 1.3), *godspell-bodung* ‘gospel-preaching’

(7 occurrences, all in Ælfric), *godspellere* ‘evangelist’ (272 occurrences), *godspellian* ‘to preach the Gospel, evangelise’ (21 occurrences), *godspellīc* ‘evangelical, of the Gospel’ (71 occurrences), *godspellisc* ‘evangelical, of the Gospel’ (1 occurrence), and *godspell-traht* ‘exposition of the Gospel, homily’ (3 occurrences).

The semantic scope of *godspell* (cf. DOE s.v.) is also wider than that of its potential competitors. Being more specific than just any ‘good tidings’, *godspell* is metonymically extended to ‘the book that contains the good tidings’ and, further, to ‘the particular part of the book that contains the good tidings which is read during the mass’ (Lenker 1997: 89–91); thus essentially replicating the semantic development of Latin *ēvangeliūm* (DMLBS s.v.). Even though in the Middle English period *evangelist* and *evangelic(al)* replaced its derivatives *godspellere* and *godspellīc*, causing dissociation within this lexical field, present-day *gospel* still occupies a central place there (for a summary of ME developments within the semantic field of ‘gospel’, see Käsmann 1961: 86–87). It is now time to consider the factors that had triggered its selection and insured its subsequent diffusion and continuous dominance.

First of all, calquing, or loan-translation, is a rhetorically-grounded strategy of etymologisation that was common throughout the Middle Ages. Encouraged by the Church Fathers and cultivated by Anglo-Saxon schoolmasters, it could be used as a mnemonic device, an interpretative and argumentative tool (Copeland & Sluiter 2009: 313, 339–344). It must have been widely used in the early decades of the Anglo-Saxon Christianity for many key concepts of the new faith were loan-translations and semantic loans rather than direct loans: *godspell* not *evangelium*, *Hælend* not *Jesus*, *fulluht* not *baptism*, *rōd* not *cross*, *ēastre* not *pasca*, etc. (see Green 1998: 275–290; cf. Kastovsky 1992: 300). These terms are also an important illustration of how “a mission policy of accommodation” officially expressed by Gregory the Great worked out in the linguistic choices of his followers, Christianising not only pagan rituals but also vernacular words (Green 1998: 372).

Secondly, *godspell* as a new term for the new religion was transparent in meaning and easy to analyse morphologically. Compounds with *-spell* form an extremely big family of words taking nouns, adjectives and adverbs as their first elements: *bealu-* ‘wicked-’, *bī-* ‘by-’, *eald-* ‘old-’, *fær-* ‘sudden-’, *forþ-* ‘forth-’, *god-* ‘good’, *gūþ-* ‘war-’, *hilde-* ‘war-’, *inwit-* ‘evil-’, *lār-* ‘lore-’, *lāþ-* ‘loath-’, *lēas-* ‘false-’, *lēof-* ‘pleasant’, *lyge-*

‘false-’, *morgen-* ‘morning-’, *riht-* ‘right-’, *sār-* ‘sorrow-’, *sōþ-* ‘sooth-’, *wēa-* ‘woe-’, *wil-* ‘well-’ (BT). Gothic, OHG, OS and ON data show that similar, borrowed or cognate compounds were probably available in all Germanic languages. At the moment of its introduction into OE *god-spell* relied on a common word-formation strategy. Moreover, as several OE compounds could be used to convey the idea of ‘good tidings’, there is no compelling reason to believe that *god-spell* should necessarily be contemporary with the Christianisation – it could as well predate it. If so, was there anything in the semantics of *god-spell* that would have made it a more attractive name for ‘the good tidings, the evangelical message’? I think the answer is in the potential polysemy of *god*: *god-spell* was chosen precisely because its written form allows for the ‘God’s message’ etymology and spoken form could have allowed for Christian puns. After all in the Anglo-Saxon tradition the story of St Augustine’s mission started with Gregory the Great’s playing on the names of *Angli*, *Deiri* and *Aelle* and spinning them together into a pun on angels, God’s wrath and alleluia (*HE* ii.1).

Furthermore, *godspell* was one of the loan-translations exported by the Anglo-Saxon missionaries to other Germanic peoples: *godspell* is attested in *Heliand* (i.25), *gotspel* in the Old High German *Tatian* (22.1, 145.10; produced around 830) and *Monsee Fragments* (xxxvii.17; between 790 and 820), *guðspjall* in Old Norse (Ilkow 1968: 151; Green 1998: 347); the verb *gotspellôn* occurs in *Tatian* (13.25, 18.2, and 22.4).³ A parallel derivative is also recorded in Gothic. The preterite form *þiupspilloda* ‘preached, proclaimed’ with only one attestation in Luke 3.18 is derived from *þiups* ‘good’ and *spill* ‘tale’.⁴ Regarding the OS and OHG terms Ilkow, and Green after him, conjecture that by the time *godspell* reached the continental Germanic varieties the reanalysis of ‘good message’ as ‘God’s message’ had already taken place, which is supported by the OHG spellings *gotspel* rather than **guotspel* and by the *Heliand* author’s use of a seemingly synonymous phrase *ârundi godes* ‘God’s message’ (Ilkow 1968: 150–151; Green 1998: 346–347). The fact that *spel godes* is found four more times (only in line codas) in

³ Data retrieved from the *Thesaurus Indogermanischer Text- und Sprachmaterialien* (TITUS).

⁴ This single attestation has been interpreted as a piece of evidence for the legendary influence of the Gothic missions. For literature on Gothic Christian loans in other Germanic languages see Feulner (2000: 30, note 98) and for a recent general evaluation of the evidence for Gothic influence in OE see Durkin (2014).

Heliand vii.572, xvi.1376, xvii.1381 and xxxii.2650 may further substantiate their claim. OE influence is strongest in monastic centres associated with Anglo-Saxon missions, such as Fulda; elsewhere *evangelio* or *evangelium* forms are preferred (Green 1998: 347). Even in *Heliand* one instance on *euangelium* is also present (i.13), in OE, however, the use of the direct loan is marginal.

Whether a Christianised vernacular term or a loan-translation, the diffusion of *godspell* had to depend upon social networks associated with the newly established church. Assuming that this term would be favoured by the Roman mission to Kent, we can tentatively reconstruct its introduction (or adoption) to the late 590s and its circulation to the court of king Æthelberht and a few Kentish pupils of St Augustine at Canterbury. It would then spread together with the first sees and monasteries to other localities making its slow progress among the royals and the emerging native clergy: to Rochester and London in 604, to York and Lincoln in 627, to East Anglia and Wessex in the 630s. This scenario, of course, is only a conjecture based on no direct evidence. What makes it likely, however, is the availability of OS and OHG data. For example, we know that the monastery of Fulda was founded in 744 by the pupils of St Boniface (d.754), who introduced some Anglo-Saxon terms into the local monastic usage. In the 830s *gotspel* was still used by the translator of the *Tatian* produced at Fulda. It follows that, first, missionary work and lexical innovation can take the same root, and because the former is fairly well documented we can extrapolate from church expansion to linguistic diffusion; second, *godspell* was current in Wessex and, in particular, at Nursling (near Southampton) in the late 690s–early 710s, when Boniface received his training there. Thus, the spread of the term in West Saxon could be dated to between 630s (conversion of Wessex) and 690s (Boniface’s school years).

Thus, the early stage of the borrowing should be seen within the wider context of Christian innovation, initially affecting social and intellectual elites through missionary work and monastic schools. With the spread of religious houses and establishment of parishes (Yorke 2006: ch.3) GOSPEL and other key concepts of the faith would have been brought to new geographical points and disseminated among lower clerical orders and ordinary parishioners. Regular reference to and readings from the Gospel during religious observances (Lenker 1997) would have made the word habitual even to laymen and

generated the frequencies necessary for its adoption by the majority of the converted English speakers, as is made clear by numerous examples from homilies (ex. 8).

- (8) *VIII IDVS IANVARII EPIPHANIA DOMINI* Men ða leofostan nu for feawum dagum we oferræddon þis godspel ætforan eow (ÆCHom I, 7 (232.1))
 ‘6 January, *The Epiphany of the Lord*. Most beloved men, a few days ago we read over this gospel in front of you’

2. *martyr*

While the history of *godspell* shows that loan-translation could be a very successful borrowing strategy, this case study demonstrates a development in the opposite direction: *martyr* of Greek origin competes and eventually takes over native-based lexemes with the meaning ‘martyr, witness’ and ‘martyr, sufferer’. I begin this section with a quotation from Book VII of Isidore’s *Etymologies* (ex. 9) that explains how the term *martyr* should be understood and why it is preferable to its Latin equivalent *testis*.

- (9) ***Martyres*** Graeca lingua, Latine *testes* dicuntur, unde et *testimonia* Graece *martyria* nuncupantur. *Testes* autem ideo uocati sunt, quia propter *testimonium* Christi passiones sustinuerunt, et usque ad mortem pro ueritate certauerunt. Quod uero non *testes* (quod Latine utique possemus), sed Graece ***martyres*** appellamus, familiarius Ecclesiae auribus hoc Graecum uerbum sonat, sicut multa Graeca nomina quae pro Latinis utimur. (Etym. vii.11.1–2)
 ‘*Martyrs* in the Greek language are called *witnesses* in Latin, whence *testimonials* are called *martyria* in Greek. And they are called *witnesses* because for their *witness* of Christ they suffered their passions and struggled for truth even to the point of death. But because we call them not *testes*, which we certainly could do, using the Latin term, but rather *martyrs* in the Greek, this Greek word sounds quite familiar in the ears of the Church, as do many Greek terms that we use in place of Latin.’ (translation based on Barney et al. 2006: 170; emphasis added)

Following Isidore the terms *martyr* and *testis* (and their derivatives) are often found together in the sources, especially in glosses and glossaries, cf. exx. 10 and 11:

- (10) *Martyr g testis l id est passionis et sanguis christi ðrow’ on crec’ giwitnis’ on læd’ þæt is ðrovnges & blodes cristes.* (DurRitGlCom (Thomp-Lind) (195.11))
 ‘*Martyr (Greek), testis (Latin) that is [the witness] of Christ’s passion and blood sufferer in Greek, witness in Latin that is of Christ’s passion and blood.*’

- (11) *Martyr testis* (CorpGl 2 (Hessels) (11.25))

The phrasing in ex. 10, from the late-tenth-century glosses to the *Durham Ritual*, is itself reminiscent of Isidore’s definition. It also supplies us with two OE glosses for the terms *martyr* and *testis*, these are *þrowere* ‘sufferer’ and *gewitnes* ‘witness’ (abbreviated by the glossator), which highlight two lexicalisation paths for semantic loans associated with the concept MARTYR. They focus either on suffering, creating an interpretative term, or on witnessing, providing an etymology-based term and, thus, copying the lexicalisation model of *martyr* in Greek and *testis* in Latin.⁵ I follow the same procedure as in 1, by first surveying the alternative lexemes for ‘witness’ and ‘sufferer’, and then suggesting reasons for the eventual success of *martyr*.

2.1. ‘witness’

A native-based *cȳþere* ‘witness; martyr’ is a semantic loan. It has a total of 100 attestations; of these 26 appear in glosses of the Latin term *testis*. There are only two authors who use *cȳþere* frequently: Ælfric (43 occurrences) and the glossator of two early-to-mid-eleventh-century manuscripts from Christ Church, Canterbury (BL Cotton Julius D.vi and Cotton Vespasian D.xii (Gneuss & Lapidge 2014: nos. 337 and 391) with 21 occurrences), used as a basis by Gneuss for his 1968 edition of a collection of hymns *Expositio hymnorum*. Walter Hofstetter identifies *cȳþere* among typical Winchester words, connecting its origin to Æthelwold’s school (1987: 5, 8, 41–44). Following

⁵ The two meanings were nicely merged in the sixteenth-century German loan-creation *Blutzeuge* ‘blood-witness.’ In the 1930s, however, the term was appropriated by the Nazi propaganda to refer to the NSDAP members who had fallen in the Munich Putsch of 1923 (Schmitz-Berning 2007: 124–125).

Gneuss (1968: 167–193) he suggests that a Winchester-glossed hymnal was available at Canterbury at the time when the local two copies of the *Expositio hymnorum* were in preparation. As a result the Canterbury glosses reveal a mixed language: Kentish in terms of phonology and inflections, but West Saxon in its vocabulary (Hofstetter 1987: 101–103).

As a student of the Winchester school, Ælfric, too, uses Winchester lexis a lot more than other authors. In fact he relies on the local monastic usage even more heavily than Æthelwold himself. A comparative analysis of their vocabulary shows that Æthelwold's rate of Winchester words is between 62 (in the translation of the *Benedictine Rule*) and 83 per cent (in *King Edgar's Establishment of Monasteries*), while Ælfric's rate is 98 per cent (Hofstetter 1987: 30–66). This dominance of Winchester-school vocabulary in the writings of its two main authors has led Ursula Lenker to propose a strong sense of linguistic identity among the teachers and pupils of Æthelwold's school and the establishment of linguistic norms of this group through cultural focusing (2000: 237). A closer study of Ælfric's texts reveals, however, that his adherence to Winchester norms was not a stable feature of his usage, or, at least, that it did not apply to all the Winchester words in equal degree. Malcolm Godden observes a change in Ælfric's tastes at around 1000, when Ælfric had finished the two series of the *Catholic Homilies* and embarked upon the *Lives of Saints* (1980: 207–209). In the two homily collections written in the early-to-mid 990s the frequencies of *cȳpere* are commensurate with those of *martyr*: 22 to 27 in *ÆCHom I* and 16 to 21 in *ÆCHom II*. The two lexemes are used “without apparent distinctions of meaning” (Godden 1980: 208). In the *Lives of Saints*, however, there are only 3 occurrences of *cȳpere* to 49 of *martyr*. After this work Ælfric stops using *cȳpere* altogether. Godden hypothesises that through his contacts outside the immediate Winchester circles Ælfric came to realise that *cȳpere* was “not as well known in other parts of England” and consciously abandoned the term in favour of the wider spread *martyr* (1980: 222). Among other external influences the authority of Archbishop Wulfstan of York (d. 1023), with whom Ælfric corresponded, might have prompted him to move away from several Winchester words and, conversely, to accept non-Winchester and even northern norms. Just as *cȳpere* decreased in frequency and disappeared, the Scandinavian loan *lagu* ‘law’ was getting more and more prominent in Ælfric's later texts (Godden 1980: 216–217). Such degree of precision in tracing the diffusion of lexical

items is, unfortunately, unavailable for most the OE period and for most of OE texts. But thanks to these influential and prolific authors, who, in addition, were contemporaries and pen-pals, we can at least envisage and reconstruct how loans, and new lexis in general, could have been generated, spread or ousted, sometimes, seemingly, within a matter of decades. Interestingly though *cȳþere* was still understood as ‘martyr’ around 1225 when a collection of OE sermons, which included five homilies by Ælfric, in a late-eleventh-century manuscript Hatton 113 (Oxford, Bodleian Library) was glossed at Worcester (MED s.v. *martir* 1b; Gneuss & Lapidge 2014: no.637). However, the term was not used in original ME works (Käsmann 1961: 89).

Two more lexemes merit a brief mention here in relation with the concept WITNESS: *(ge)wita* ‘wise man; elder; witness’ and *(ge)witness* ‘witness’. Potentially both terms could have taken the same lexicalisation path as *cȳþere*, from ‘witness’ to ‘martyr’, with *(ge)witness* having some currency in Northumbrian glosses as ex. 10 shows (glossing *testis* but never *martyr* though). Neither of them are listed in the TOE under category Martyrdom :: A martyr (16.02.04.16|01 n). A cursory search in the DOEC suggests that both terms occurred predominantly in legal contexts, which may have precluded semantic extension.

2.2. ‘sufferer’

Although *þrowere* ‘sufferer’, as already observed, is a more transparent term semantically, its frequencies are about the same as those of *cȳþere*. It occurs 83 times in the DOEC and belongs to a family of derivatives based on the verb *þrowian* ‘to suffer (physically or emotionally); to suffer martyrdom; to pay/atone for’ (BT), which itself is attested more than 650 times in the DOEC. Its derivatives include *þrowendhād* ‘martyrdom’ (3 occurrences), *þrow(i)endlic* ‘capable of suffering; passive’ (18 occurrences), *þrowung* and *þrowing* ‘suffering; Christ’s passion; martyrdom’ (507 and 6 occurrences), *þrowung-dæg* ‘the day of martyrdom’ (1 occurrence), *þrowung-ræding* ‘martyrology’ (1 occurrence), *þrowung-tīd* ‘the time/anniversary of one’s martyrdom’ (5 occurrences), *þrowung-tīma* ‘a time of suffering/ill health’ (1 occurrence), and *þrowyestre* ‘a female martyr’ (1 occurrence; of St Cecilia in ArPrGl 1 (Holt-Campb) 40.1). On average *þrowere* features between 1 and 3 times in about a dozen texts: “in poetry and Anglian texts and in the Arundel prayer gloss from Canterbury” (the same that

contains the single occurrence of *þrowyestre*; Milfull 1996: 84). Only in two of them *þrowere* appears as the dominant ‘martyr’ term. The first is an interlinear gloss to a collection of liturgical texts known as the *Durham Ritual* produced in the second half of the tenth century in Chester-le-Street, Northumbria, by Aldred (fl. c.970), the glossator of the famous *Lindisfarne Gospels*. The second text is an interlinear gloss to the *Durham Hymnal* (Durham, Cathedral B.iii.32; Gneuss & Lapidge 2014: no.244), featuring 15 occurrences of *þrowere* and 4 of *cýþere*. Of these *þrowere* is used by the main glossator, while *cýþere* is restricted to references to St Stephen and appears to be in a different hand (Milfull 1996: 84). Just like the *Expositio hymnorum*, with which it shares most of the Latin texts, the gloss to the *Durham Hymnal* is a hybrid of West Saxon and Kentish features. Although *þrowere* also brings in a possible Northumbrian connection, the provenance of the gloss to the *Durham Hymnal* could be reconstructed either as Winchester (or a centre influenced by Winchester) with subsequent Canterbury revisions (Milfull 1996: 70–91) or as Canterbury itself (Christ Church or St Augustine’s) with Winchester words springing from an earlier Winchester-derived gloss available at Canterbury (Gneuss 1968: 132–134; Hofstetter 1987: 108–110).

The last term that is mentioned in the TOE along with *martyr*, *cýþere* and *þrowere*, is *rōd-bora* ‘rood-bearer; martyr’. It is marked as both rare and glosses-specific, which is confirmed by the DOEC: 1 occurrence in PrudGl 1 (Meritt) where it glosses *crucifer* rather than *martyr*. Before I turn to the dominant term I consider diatopic and diachronic distributions of *cýþere* and *þrowere* in a bit more detail.

2.3. *cýþere* vs. *þrowere*

To be able to trace the distributions of the two native-based lexemes I have plotted their attestations in localisable texts (based on Gneuss & Lapidge 2014 or on Ker 1957 if the manuscripts are post-1100) on maps generated by the mapping site CARTO and colour-coded by the approximate date of the manuscript in which the lexemes occur. Each approximate date receives a pin on the map corresponding to at least one manuscript that uses *cýþere* (a, left) or *þrowere* (b, right). The number of manuscripts with the same provenance and dating is indicated by a little figure above the pin. Greener shades show earlier attestations, redder shades later attestations. The details on provenance and dating of manuscripts are provided in Table 1.

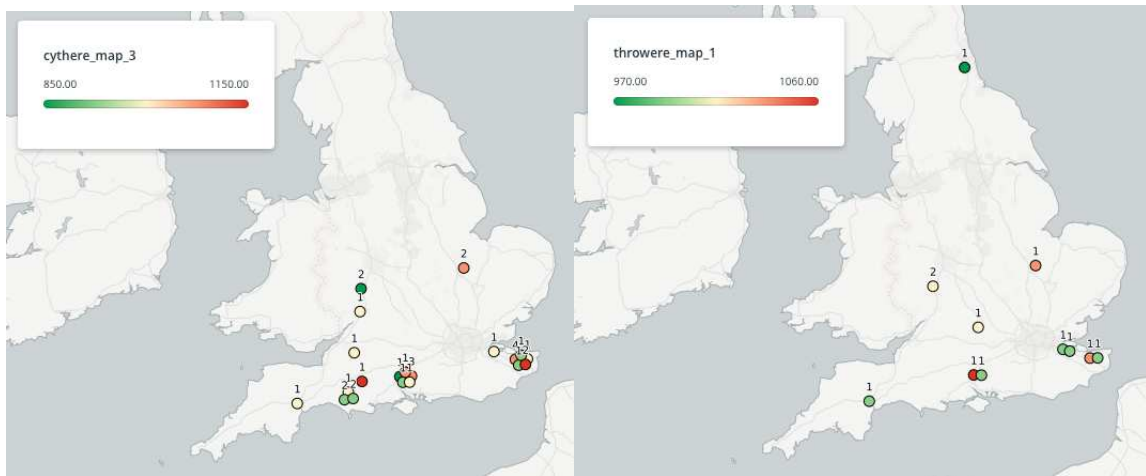


Figure 1. Distributions of *cýþere* (a, left) and *þrowere* (b, right) by date and number of texts

Place	Date	No. texts	Place	Date	No. texts
Bath	1025	1	Abingdon	1025	1
Canterbury	960	1	Canterbury	1015	1
Canterbury	1000	1	Canterbury	1035	1
Canterbury	1015	1	Chester-le-Street	970	1
Canterbury	1030	4	Exeter	975	1
Canterbury	1150	2	Ramsey	1040	1
Cerne Abbas	990	2	Rochester	975	1
Cerne Abbas	1000	2	Rochester	1010	1
Cerne Abbas	1010	1	Winchester	1010	1
Exeter	1010	1	Winchester	1060	1
Gloucester	1025	1	Worcester	1025	2
Ramsey	1040	2			
Rochester	1010	1			
Shaftesbury	1100	1			
Winchester	925	1			
Winchester	950	1			
Winchester	1010	1			
Winchester	1065	3			

Winchester	1075	1	
Worcester	850	2	

Table 1. Distributions of *cȳbere* (a, left) and *þrowere* (b, right) by date and number of texts

Figure 1a and Table 1a demonstrate that *cȳbere* enjoyed a longer life-span (c. 850 to c. 1150) and a somewhat denser distribution. The manuscripts where *cȳbere* is attested, as also suggested by earlier research, cluster around Winchester centres and Canterbury, although the earliest two from Worcester may point to the Mercian origin of the term. What the map also confirms is that *cȳbere* was probably unknown in the north. Thus its diffusion from Worcester (c. 850) to Winchester (c. 925) could be linked to that major strand of cultural influence from Mercia that Wessex experienced at least from the time of Alfred's father Æthelwulf (d. 858) (Keynes 1998). The term reached Canterbury c. 960, but its heyday was probably between c. 990 and mid eleventh century, when Winchester texts and glosses were brought to and/or copied for other centres in Wessex and Kent.

þrowere (Figure 1b, Table 1b) emerges in Chester-le-Street, Exeter and Rochester at about the same time (c. 970–975); perhaps this lexicalisation path was more easily available, given the high frequencies of the verb *þrowian* 'to suffer' and the noun *þrowung* 'suffering, passion', so that the semantic extension 'sufferer' > 'martyr' could take place in several localities simultaneously. In the eleventh century, however, the term is strongest in Kent and Winchester. Just like *cȳbere* though, it is not attested outside OE (Käsmann 1961: 89).

2.4. Why *martyr*?

The term *martyr* is more frequent than *cȳbere* and *þrowere* taken together, being attested a total of 350 times in the entire OE corpus, 80 times in spelling *martir* and 270 times in spelling *martyr*. Both spellings, however, suggest that the borrowing happened after the Conversion, for the forms do not have *i*-mutation (Campbell 1959: §497; Feulner 2000: 257; Durkin 2014: 116, 145–151). Many texts show a preference for one or the other spelling, e.g. the *Old English Orosius* for *martyr* (4 occurrences), C copy of *Gregory's*

Dialogues for *martir* (8 occurrences), but for many authors and scribes the spellings are apparently interchangeable, e.g. Ælfric uses *martir* 26 times and *martyr* 87 times, in the *Old English Bede* the distributions are 6 and 17, in H copy of *Gregory's Dialogues* 3 and 31, etc. It would seem that *martir* was the earlier form but that from the Alfredian revival onwards etymological respelling *martyr* gained more ground.

martyr is a base for a number of derivatives: *martyr-cynn* ‘a race of martyrs’ (1 occurrence); *martirdōm* / *martyrdōm* (20 and 120); *martirhād* / *martyrhād* ‘martyrdom’ (7 and 6); *(ge)mart(y)rian* ‘to suffer martyrdom’ (71 occurrences); *martyr-liua* ‘a life of martyrs’ (1); *martyr-racu* ‘an account of martyrs’ (4); and *martyrung* ‘suffering, passion’ (1, used of Christ). Furthermore, there are 7 attestations of the Greek derivative *martirlog* / *martyrlog* ‘martyrology’ (4 and 3) and a few forms that look like code-switches or typos: *martiri* and *martiribus*.

The absolute frequencies of *martyr* suggest that it was the preferred term for ‘martyr’. Although the number of its derivatives is commensurate with those of the verb *þrowian*, it is the latter stem that is attested more generally as part of verb (650 occurrences⁶) and noun (*þrowung* and *þrowing* 513 occurrences), which are both wider semantically (see 2.2). *þrowung*, however, is strongly preferred in the sense ‘Christ’s passion’, as 261 occurrences of collocations *Cristes/Hælendes/Dryhtnes þrowung* demonstrate. Thus, for terminological precision it was important that both terms were available, as shown in ex. 12.

- (12) he is gecweden protomartyr þæt is se forma cypere: for ðan þe he æfter cristes
þrowunge ærest **martyrdom** geðrowade. (ÆCHom I, 3 (201.88))
 ‘he [St Stephen] is called *protomartyr* that is “the first witness”, because after
 Christ’s **passion** he was the first to suffer **martyrdom**’

I suggest that this precision might also have played a role in *martyr*’s eventual ousting of *þrowere* and *cypere*, as it combined the semes of ‘suffering’ and ‘witnessing’ from the start. Ideologically this preference was possibly strengthened by the predilection to

⁶ Only a fraction of these occurrences have the sense ‘to suffer physical pain, illness’ – 34 in medical texts. Another portion (68 occurrences) are collocations *þrowian martyrdōm* ‘to suffer martyrdom’.

martyr over *testis* in Latin usage and the pleasantness to “the ears of the Church” that had been adduced by the great Church Father and continued to rely on his authority.

This section has demonstrated that some Christian terms originate in local glossing traditions and retain strong associations with them throughout their life-span (cf. Godden 1980). If, in addition, they have a universally recognised competitor, such as *martyr* must have been, they may eventually be ousted even from local monastic norms. The etymology of *martyr* must have been frequently explained in homilies and sermons commemorating Christian martyrs, and the term became gradually familiar to the ears of common parishioners, again spreading from high to low clergymen first and then from parish priests to laymen of all social levels. Thus, as with *godspell*, the diffusion of *martyr* was closely connected with the spread of Christianity and preaching practices. The latter in particular would generate contexts in which *martyr*, *cȳþere* and *þrowere* could have been used together – the Greek word as a default term and the OE translations as its technical equivalents.⁷

3. *magister*

3.1. *magister* vs. *mægester*

This Latin loan is attested in two forms in OE: 1) *mægester* is earlier, showing *i*-mutation and having a derivative *mægsterdōm* ‘the office of a teacher’, but less frequent with 7 occurrences in 5 texts (see Figure 2a); 2) *magister* is later, showing an unmutated *a* and having no attested derivatives (cf. Campbell 1959: §§496–497, 511, 548, 550; Wollmann 1990: 104–106, 173, 579, 616), and more frequent with 29 occurrences (see Figure 2b; cf. OED s.v. *master* n¹). Latin *magister* ‘ruler, master; teacher’ is ultimately the source for both forms. The use of the more Latinate *magister* correlates with texts that have a closer affinity with Latin: translations and glosses. There are 17 attestations of *magister* in the translations of the Alfredian period: 9 in the *Old English Bede*, 3 in the *Pastoral Care*, 2 in *Boethius* and 2 in *Meters*, and 1 in *Orosius*. Other attestations come from the OE *Letter of Alexander to Aristotle* (3) and glosses (also 3). Only 6 are found in independent OE texts. This correlation suggests that many instances of *magister* may be caused by translation-induced transfer, as in ex. 13:

⁷ Ælfric’s *Catholic Homilies* intended for a wide unlearned audience is a good case in point (ex. 12).

- (13) *Non est discipulus super **magistrum** perfectus autem omnis erit sicut **magister** eius* ne is 1 nese discipul ofer **magistre** wisfæst ðonne eghuelec bið gif 1 sua **laruu** his. (LkG1 (Li) (6.40))
- ‘The student is not above his teacher: but everyone [who is] perfect shall be as his teacher.’

It appears that the first *magister* in the Lindisfarne gloss is a slip of the pen (note also *discipulus* glossed by *discipul*), for in the next clause Aldred switches back to his more habitual gloss *lāruu* (West Saxon *lārēow*) ‘teacher’. This is also one of the two attestations of *magister* in Northumbrian, most of the data being otherwise limited to southern manuscripts (West Saxon and Kentish) and occurring sporadically in Mercia and East Anglia (Figure 2b).

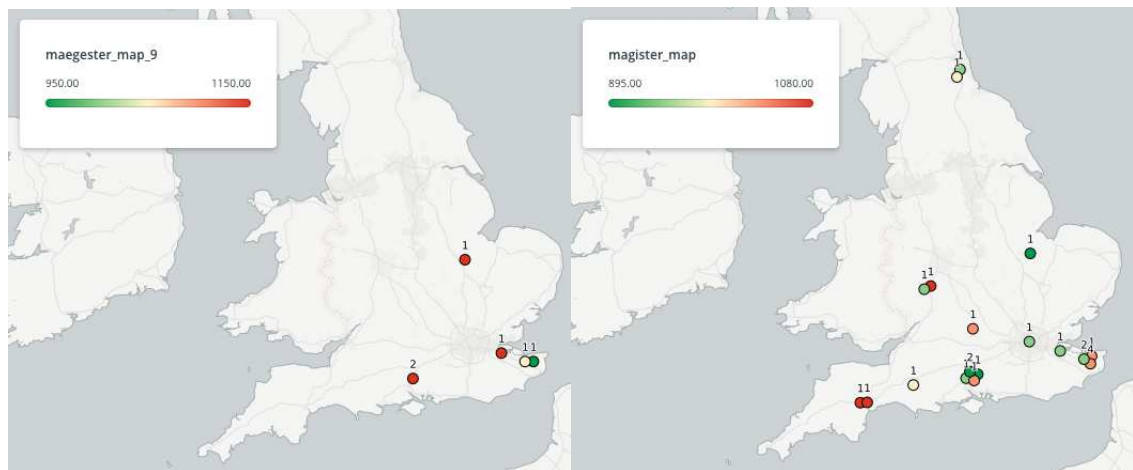


Figure 2. Distributions of *mægester* (a, left) and *magister* (b, right) by date and number of texts

Place	Date	No. texts	Place	Date	No. texts
Canterbury	950	1	Abingdon	1025	1
Canterbury	1035	1	Canterbury	950	2
Peterborough	1130	1	Canterbury	1035	1
Rochester	1125	1	Canterbury	1050	4
Winchester	1150	2	Chester-le-Street	975	1
			Durham	1010	1
			Exeter	1075	1

	Exeter	1080	1
	London	975	1
	Rochester	975	1
	Sherborne	1000	1
	Thorney	935	1
	Winchester	895	2
	Winchester	935	1
	Winchester	950	1
	Winchester	1035	1
	Worcester	975	1
	Worcester	1075	1

Table 2. Distributions of *mægester* (a, left) and *magister* (b, right) by date and number of texts

A comparison of the two maps in Figure 2 suggests that in spite of its being an earlier loan, *mægester* does not feature much in the early sources, while *magister* is attested continuously from around 935 (Table 2). Moreover, three out of five localisable texts with *mægester* are found in manuscripts from the first half of the twelfth century.

magister is at first stronger in the south and south-east, except for the two green dots at Worcester (second-half-of-the-tenth-century copy of the *Pastoral Care*) and Thorney (early-tenth-century copy of the *Old English Bede*). I would, however, hesitate to interpret the data as pointing to the southern innovation of *magister*, as this term for ‘teacher’ would have been available at any monastic school at an early stage of Latin-learning and could have been introduced at several locations at the same or at different times.

Semantically there is indeed a tendency to prefer *magister* in ‘teacher’ contexts (as in ex. 14), *magister* ‘master, lord’ being used only on 7 occasions.

- (14) Hwilon ic wiste þæt sum mæssepreost, se þe min **magister** wæs on þam timan,
hæfde þa boc Genesis, & he cuðe be dæle Lyden understandan (ÆGenPref (12))

‘At one point I knew that one mass-priest, who was my teacher at the time, had the book of Genesis, and he could understand a little Latin’

In two instances, in which *magister* refers to Christ or God the Father, the ambiguity of the term seems intentional, as in ex. 15.

- (15) swa swa ealra **magister** Drihten Crist lærde & cwæð: (Bede 1 (16.66.10))
 ‘as the teacher/ruler of everyone Lord Christ taught and said’

It is interesting to compare ex. 14, quoting Ælfric’s prefatory letter to his translation of Genesis, to ex. 16 from his *Grammar*. Letters are often considered to be among the best available approximations to spoken genres in the Middle Ages (e.g. Elspass 2012). Even though when writing to his superior – the letter is addressed to his patron Æthelweard (d. 998), ealdorman of Wessex – Ælfric had to confirm to a degree of formality, we may assume that this text is closer to spoken OE than the language of homilies or, indeed, Genesis. The letter shows then that *magister* was ‘normal’ for Ælfric in his less formal genres and situations in which he knew he would be understood – Æthelweard may have been a decent Latinist himself (Lutz 2000), although doubts about his authorship of the Latin *Chronicon Æthelweardi* have been raised (Godden 2007: 6). In his more controlled language, intended, moreover, for young boys beginning to learn Latin, Ælfric carefully avoided *magister*, translating it instead by *lārēow*:

- (16) o is toclypigendlic *ADVERBIVM*: o *magister*, doce me eala ðu lareow, tæc me.
 (ÆGram (241.15))
 ‘o is a vocative *adverbium*: o *magister*, doce me Oh you teacher, instruct me!’

His focus here is on the terminology and function of vocative adverbs. The explanation has to be crystal-clear, and the OE term for ‘teacher’ is obviously preferable. I think that both the distributions of *magister* in Latin-dependent texts and this avoidance of an educated word in a text intended for an elementary audience suggests that it was indeed stylistically marked. Together with its overwhelmingly teacher-related use these factors

point towards monastic schools as places in which the newer Latinate type originated, perhaps as part of teacher-student jargon.

mægester can cover the same semantic ground as *magister*. It is used 5 times for ‘teacher’: once in a mid-tenth-century copy of *Boethius* (in form *mægister* along with two occurrences of *magister*), once in a spurious twelfth-century charter from Winchester (Ch1428 (Harm113), surviving in two copies) and 3 times in a small late-eleventh century collection of saints’ lives, likely by the same author (2 occurrences in LS 9 (Giles) and 1 in LS 29 (Nicholas); see Treharne 1997). The sense ‘master, lord’ is represented even more poorly – 2 occurrences in two texts: 1 in the anonymous translation of Exodus (second quarter of 11th century, Canterbury) and 1 in the *Peterborough Chronicle* (ChronE 1086.82).

To conclude this section, *mægester* and *magister* appear to be a classical instance of a doublet pair, rather than two forms of the same lexeme. Although they are very close semantically, their distributions suggest that *mægester* and *magister* may have had different register and possibly even different social connotations. *mægester* surfaces only occasionally in early texts, with most of the attestations coming from post-Conquest period when the West Saxon standard has started to decay. *magister*, on the other hand, is relatively frequent throughout the OE period but its usage has a clear Latinate stamp. Thus the former may have correlated with more colloquial and uneducated speech, while the latter with sophisticated texts and educated readers. As mentioned before, the Latin etymon of *magister* was constantly available in educational contexts and must have created plenty of opportunity for multiple borrowing in Old, Middle and Modern English, making it difficult to verify the continuity of this lexeme diachronically. Anglo-Norman and Old French etymons (*maistre*, *mestre*) make it equally difficult to reconstruct the development of *mægester* in the transition to the ME period (cf. OED s.v. *master*).

3.2. ‘teacher’

Let us now take a look at other terms that belong to the same semantic fields as *magister*. According to the TOE, a variety of lexemes can take on ‘teacher’ meanings, and, if one also includes those that refer to ‘spiritual teacher, preacher’, their number may seem overwhelming. Many of them look marginal, however, occurring only one or two times,

often in glosses. I give the whole body of synonyms as an alphabetical list commenting briefly on their distributions and semantics.

- *ǣ-boda* ‘messenger of the law, preacher of the gospel’ features only once in the DOEC in GuthB (936) and is probably a rare poetic compound;
- *bodere* ‘teacher, preacher’ has 4 occurrences in Northumbrian glosses for Latin *praeceptor* ‘teacher’ and *praedicator* ‘preacher’;
- *bodiend* ‘preacher, teacher’ has 11 occurrences as a noun, of them 6 in glosses;
- *bydel* ‘herald; preacher; apostle’ is relatively frequent with c.120 attestations according to the DOE, but most of these are ‘herald, messenger’ contexts, with ‘preacher’ and ‘apostle’ being a semantic extension limited to sense 2 (DOE s.v.)
- *ēpel-boda* ‘apostle of the country, missionary’ is another poetic compound restricted (1 occurrence) to GuthB (1001);
- *fēster-fæder* ‘foster-father; tutor’ occurs only once in the sense ‘tutor’ (Bede 5 9.410.11) among the 6 attestations recorded by the DOE;
- *fore-lǣrende* ‘guide, teacher’ has 2 attestations within the same text from the *Blickling Homilies* (LS 20 (AssumptMor) 47 and 199);
- *godspellere* ‘evangelist, preacher’ with 272 occurrences is probably marginal to the semantic field ‘teacher’, typically referring to the four evangelists;
- *hēah-lārēow* ‘chief teacher’ one attestation in a gloss in (ClGl 1 (Stryker) 106) *Archimandrita heahleareow*;
- *lǣrend* ‘teacher’ normally glosses the Latin participle *docens*; I have come across a singular example of the noun in (HomS 22 (CenDom 1) 69; cf. BT);
- *lǣrestre* ‘female teacher’ has 3 attestations, of these 2 in Ælfric;
- *lārēow* ‘teacher, master, preacher’ occurs c.1,100 times in a variety of texts and dialects;
- *lār-þegn* ‘lore-thane, teacher’ is restricted to 1 occasion in (Nic (C) 146);
- *māga-toga* ‘youngman-leader, tutor’ is probably a phantom word, for the closest form I could find is in a gloss in (OccGl 45.1.2 (Meritt) 117) *pedagogos magata*;
- *prēdicere* ‘preacher’ another phantom – no attestations in the DOEC;
- *tācend* ‘commander, prescriber, teacher’ only 2 occurrences as noun, in closely related texts of (BenR 68.128.10) and (BenRW 68.141.5);

- *þēod-lārēow* ‘folk-teacher’ a poetic compound occurring only in (Seasons 95).

Although many words share the semantics of *magister*, at least in part, it is only *lārēow* that can be seen as a real competitor. Not only does it cover a wide spectrum of meanings, but its frequencies also suggest that it was the default term for ‘teacher’, rendering the outcome of the competition rather unlikely for *magister*.

3.3. ‘master’

Although less frequent the sense ‘master, lord, owner’ is primary for *magister*. This field, too, can be covered by a great variety of terms. In the list below I only included those TOE categories that had *magister* as one of their members – 12.01.01.04.02|03.01 n ‘a lord, master’; 12.03|03 n ‘a guide, director, ruler’.

- *begymend* ‘governor, ruler’ has 4 attestations, of these 3 in glosses;
- *dihtend* ‘director, governor’ 3 attestations, of these 2 in glosses;
- *dihtnere* ‘steward, manager’ 10 attestations, of these 6 in glosses for *dispensator* and *dictator*;
- *forestandend* ‘one standing before, overseer’ 1 occurrence, translating *antistes* ‘overseer; bishop’ in (ÆGram 51.15): *antistes bisceop oððe forstandende*;
- *helma* ‘rudder-man, ruler’ used once, figuratively of God in (Bo 35.97.10);
- *hlāford* ‘lord; Lord’ 1,224 occurrences;
- *lād-mann* ‘leader, guide’ 3 occurrences, all in the *OE Heptateuch*;
- *lādrinc* ‘guide’ 1 occurrence in (LawAbt 7);
- *rihtend* ‘ruler’ 3 occurrences, of these 2 in Alfredian texts (Bo 4.10.15) and (GDPref and 4 (C) 27.297.3), 1 in poetry (ChristA,B,C 797);
- *stēora* ‘steersman; ruler’ 10 occurrences;
- *stēorend* ‘ruler’ 3 occurrences;
- *stihtend* ‘ruler, protector’ 5 occurrences, of these 4 in glosses for *protector*;
- *stihtere* ‘director, steward’ 2 occurrences both in Alfredian texts (CP 50.391.17) and (GDPref and 3 (C) 20.221.16);
- *wealdend* ‘master, ruler’ 391 occurrences;
- *wīsa* ‘leader’ 18 occurrences, mostly poetic;

- *(ge)wissi(g)end* ‘ruler’ 14 occurrences, mostly poetic.

The conclusions from this list are similar to those above: there are too many OE lexemes that cover the same semantic ground, and the terms *hlāford* and *wealdend* are too frequent to compete with, before the introduction of the secondary influence from the Romance *mestre*.

4. Conclusions

The loanwords analysed in this study fall into two major categories: *godspell*, *martyr* and members of their semantic fields are cultural loans, while *magister* is a basic loan. To a large extent this seems to have defined the successful introduction and diffusion of the former and the relatively unsuccessful adoption of the latter in the OE period: a new concept with a new name (whether foreign- or native-based) does not have to compete with a host of RL synonyms. In this respect the onomasiological study of the three chosen lexemes proved to be especially useful, for it highlighted the fact that *magister* was limited to educated contexts from the start, while its partial synonyms *hlāford* and *lārēow* remained in general use. At the same time close attention to the onomasiological context of cultural loans reveals a much more nuanced story of their adoption, for several RL lexicalisation paths may be available and chosen for the same SL term, as demonstrated by regional and often scriptoria-specific preferences for such words as *evangelium* or *cýþere*. The test of place and geographical mapping of loans were especially helpful in emphasising these tendencies. Together with the test of time they demonstrated two frequent scenarios: 1) some loans like *cýþere*, typically loan-translations, can originate in glossing practices of a particular monastic community, whence they may spread via social networks facilitated by relocation of actors or manuscripts (cf. Lenker 2000; Timofeeva 2017) to other monastic communities; 2) other loans, typically direct loans like *evangelium* or *magister*, can potentially emerge in several bilingual communities at the same time or at different times, which makes their diffusion patterns harder to canvass geographically and chronologically. Further, for key Christian loans like *godspell* or *martyr* that are attested frequently across the OE period geographical and social diffusion is suggested to be seen as part of the greater cultural innovation and spread associated with the conversion to Christianity. Canterbury and Kent in general can be seen as the

centre of innovation for many loans, although it is conceivable that many others would spread from the north together with Irish missions. Outside the clerical communities these new words were first introduced to prominent social leaders, as part of the evangelical mission but also in an attempt to secure their protection and patronage. With the establishment of a more stable church administration the loans spread to lower social classes via parish churches and preaching.

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